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RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 002512

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT'S STATEMENT ON US CONVOY ACCIDENT

REF: KABUL 2473

Classified By: A/DCM ANGUS SIMMONS FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. On May 31, the Wolesi Jirga (lower house of the Afghan National Assembly) issued a press release summarizing its debate on the US convoy crash on May 29. The release called for legal action against those responsible for the crash. While the release is non-binding, it accurately reflects opinion in Parliament. CFC-A is currently working on its response. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) Following is an unofficial translation of the text of the Wolesi Jirga's press release:

BEGIN PRESS RELEASE. The Wolesi Jirga expresses regret over the traffic accident that occurred on May 29, 2006.

In a meeting chaired by Parliament speaker Mohammed Yunus Qanooni, the representatives of the people indicated that poverty, unemployment, government corruption, bribery and outside interference were the main causes of bad security in Afghanistan. In this meeting, the following decisions were made regarding the previous day's traffic accident.

- 1) Those responsible for the traffic accident that happened in Kabul on May 29 should be identified and brought before the law.
- 2) In order to express sympathy for the families of the victims, necessary assistance should be provided to them.
- 3) Those individuals who were harmed in the accident must be compensated.
- 4) Those who took the opportunity to commit illegal acts should be identified and handed over to the law.

In addition, decisions were made regarding improving the security situation and understanding the causes of poor security conditions in the country. The Wolesi Jirga also

discussed creating a national security strategy to identify the reasons why security is deteriorating in the countryside.
END PRESS RELEASE.

13. (C) COMMENT. Speaker Qanooni passed a message to Ambassador that he had worked to keep the most extreme anti-American statements out of the statement, which is non-binding. The press release took the place of the normal summary of debate that Qanooni does at the end of each day of open session (the debate summarized in the release was in closed session), and can be viewed in the same vein as Parliament's statements after the Abdul Rahman case: they called for an investigation into the case, but little action was taken. Nonetheless, it accurately reflects current sentiment in the Wolesi Jirga, and similar statements were repeated in debate in open session on May 31. Rumors continue to fly around Parliament, and MPs in the two house of Parliament formed a joint committee to investigate the crash themselves. Equal anger, though, has been expressed against those who, in the words of MPs, took advantage of the accident to cause disarray.

14. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED. CFC-A is continuing to conduct its investigation in cooperation with the Afghan authorities and, in coordination with the Embassy, its public diplomacy response to Parliament's statement. The existing status of forces agreement between the US and GOA, memorialized in an exchange of diplomatic notes concluded on 28 May 2003, provides DOD military and civilian personnel with status equivalent to that for the administrative and technical staff of the embassy. Importantly, this includes complete immunity from GOA criminal jurisdiction. During public debate we will attempt to avoid, to the extent possible, legal bases for

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Coalition soldiers not appearing in Afghan courts even though we have an exchange of notes that provides that protection. We will emphasize in public that we are working cooperatively with Afghan authorities to investigate the situation, and that mechanical failure is not a reason to bring a driver before any criminal judicial proceedings. END COMMENT.

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